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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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CONTENTS OF NOS. 2 AND 3.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS 13
THE OVERPLUS OF BLOSSOM 13
THE STILL HOUR 18
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 19
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL:—
THE GLORIOUS FOURTH 20
A SULKY CHILD 20
NATURAL HISTORY:—
THE NEST IN THE GUTTER 21
THE CRY OF "MAD DOG" 24
BIOGRAPHY:—
HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS 24
HOME RELIGION 29
BEAUTY IN DRESS 30
LETTERS OF A SISTER 31
GOLD MEDAL DOGS 33
THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT 33
THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN 34
WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP? 35
REMEDY FOR HYDROPHOBIA 35
THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE 36
IMPORTANT NOTICES 36

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
  Sails the unshadowed main,—
  The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
  And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their
    streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
  Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
  And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to
    dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
  Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt un-
    sealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
  That spread his lustrous coil;
  Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway
    through,
  Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew
    the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by
    thee,
  Child of the wandering sea,
  Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn
  While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a
    voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
  As the swift seasons roll!
  Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more
    vast,
  Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's un-
    resting sea!

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

THE OVERPLUS OF BLOSSOM.

We had a cherry-tree once, in our bit of garden, which broke out into a wonderful splendor in the spring, and sent its fragrance floating through my study window; but, as I would watch it day by day, I had to remember how it had done this before with no great success in the way of cherries, and then I began to muse over what one might call the overplus of blossom.

I had been away to the South, also, while as yet there were but few signs of spring in the North, and had found this glory haunting the woods and wild pastures and crowning the farms with its beauty; and from this time I had thought of the blossoms sweeping slowly northward until they came to my own window, and covering the land as with a mantle woven of sweetness and light, while, after they had passed our line, I could still see them sweeping northward, and knew they would never halt until they set one lonely bush afire a dear friend of mine found blooming in the hither edges of the arctic circle, as the bush bloomed for Moses in Midian. And then at last I knew that, like a great tide, this blossoming would toss its spray over into the lands of utter and hopeless sterility,

and touch the moss with specks of blossom as beautiful to those who have the eye to see them as the crowned splendor of the peaches and the apples in the rich, warm lands.

Then my musing blended with old memories, and I found myself wondering whether hosts of children would not fall into the trouble I struck in my own childhood, about the one tree we had which broke out every spring into these extravagant promises of the fruit dear to boys, whose very notions of heaven seem to abide as yet in this matchless liking for what they seem to have liked best in Eden. I wondered whether such boys would not get their first back-stroke, as I did, through their appetite and expectation, and as a great many children do of riper years. That luckless tree never did keep the promise in the summer it had made to me in the spring.

I remember one year especially, after an almost matchless outburst of blossom, how there was the meanest yield of fruit I could remember in my tiny tale of the years; and it was then I said, in some misty way common enough to children who are trying to true the world about them to the world within: "God cannot do as he will, then, or else he changes his mind. He certainly set out to give us all the plums we wanted this year. Now, what does he mean by sending the blossoms and then keeping back the fruit? Would it not better to do as I would do if I were in his place—make every blossom stand for a plum, and so save himself and save us also all this trouble?"

After that haggard year I think it was never quite so bad again. There was always a fair show of fruit, and then I was getting somewhat used to the frustration. Still, I never could make September quite keep terms with May—better and worse, but never up to the promises. And so, as I bore the trouble of that tree toward my manhood, and found I had to long for full and plenty of other fruit I must not have, I began to wonder whether it was not of the very exuberance of God's blessing that this overplus of beauty and fragrance comes to us, and whether on the Tree of Life also there may not be a blooming which never comes to anything but the bloom, and yet this in itself may be so good and true that, when we touch the heart of the mystery, we shall neither say, "God has broken his promise to us," nor that we have lost our chance to make this promise good. And as in the springtime on the trees all about us there are ten blossoms that will bloom through their brief day, and then just shower down in the wind, to one which will set and ripen into good fruit, so on the tree of my life may there not be ten beautiful aspirations to one good fruition? And yet may not these aspirations themselves be very sweet and good in their own way, and be counted as the blossoms are in the glory of the year?

Surely, it must be true that they come, as the blossoms come, out of the overplus of the divine grace and of our own abounding life, not to dishearten us and lead us to doubt, but rather to believe in this good Providence as insuring us a grand good margin to believe that God feels towards us as we feel towards our children, when we are good enough and wise enough to be content with such simple and scant fruition as they can attain to, never reckoning with them over-sharply as to what has become of their good intentions, but listening still with a large and tender interest to the endless story of what they mean to do, and glad to hear about it all because the aspiration is very beautiful to us and very good, even when we know all the time that they will forget ten of these intentions where they will carry one out clear to the end and make it bring forth good fruit.

"Dear hearts," we say, as we listen to them, "it is all right. The blossom itself is fruit in the long fair year of God; and what a wealth of it you have, to be sure! Why, you can intend and aspire enough in ten minutes to ruin you, root and branch, if you should try to make all your intentions and aspirations ripen into good fruit in the seventy years we have for our human span." And so I think it is a good thing for us all, now and then, to turn to this quieter and more restful thought of what we can do within the lines of the truest life, compared with what we can aspire to do and intend to do, and how we can no more expect or afford to turn the whole wealth of these aspirations into equally noble actions than the trees can afford to make the promise of the spring good to the last blossom in the fruit they will give us in the fall.

Margaret Fuller preserves a letter, written, as I judge, by a woman, who says: "I went this morning to hear Dr. Channing, and came away sadly tired listening to one of his great sermons. He set us up so high, and expected so much from us as the consequence of his doctrine, that, when I got home, I was fain to take my New Testament and read where Jesus says, 'Ye are more than many sparrows'; and the blessed old Word rested me and did me a sight of good, because it was not so exalting and flattering." And I think I can understand that feeling.

The soul cannot live forever in the white

light of her own dignity and glory, any more than the sweet wood violets can live forever in the sun. And so, while it is all true about the dignity of our human nature, and true, also, that no man can ever tell the whole worth of what is waiting in the waiting heavens as the fruit of God's sending and of our own human striving, still that tender glance the woman got through the heart of Christ is very restful and gracious, when we measure the distance between the aspiration and the attainment,—"Ye are more than many sparrows." And so you must not be over-troubled if, while you are quite aware of the wider vision and stronger pinions, you can neither soar so high nor fly so far as your eager hearts would have you. Ye are also the branches, and I am the Vine. So bear what fruit you can, then, this year, without damaging the stock for the next.

Believe in the trees if you cannot quite believe in yourselves, and note their happy lesson. The blossoms in themselves are good. They mean ten times more than they do; but what beauty and fragrance still abide in their meaning! How it floats over the homes of men as a delicate aroma nothing can slay except the ugly enormity of our overcrowded tenements! So we can thank God for the blossoming in our nature of beautiful and good intentions, which will be sure to fail, as we are taught to think of failing, and for the good fruit, which will be sure to ripen from some of them if we do the best we may.

I. Because this is the first thing to be sure about: that there must be in us all this plus of the promise over the fruition if there is to be any great worth in us besides, and that, in our childhood especially, it may be just this, and very little more, when we are left to live our life as God would have us live it, and when those who have the care of us and love us for ourselves are wise to see how this is about all they can expect from us, exactly as a good pomologist neither looks for nor wishes for fruit from the mere sapling, because he knows how this would fatally injure the tree. So he is quite content, you notice, to see the small things stand there and shake down their blossoms into the grass time and again, and to wait for the fruit by and by.

The strength, he will tell you, is gathering in the roots and the stock, which will come in time to a noble fruitage and repay him for all his waiting. And so it is a sad sight to me to see fathers and mothers who have no such wisdom for their children as these wise men have for the saplings, and cannot be content to let the child be a child, and nothing more, but must still burden the tender plant with demands which belong to the strong and able tree.

Fathers and mothers who are not content to keep the saplings clean from the evil things which burrow around the roots or stab the bole, and to see that the soil is good from which they draw their strength and nurture, keep them straight and true, and then let the sun shine on them, and the sweet dews of their childhood refresh them,—who cannot be content, I say, with all this, and the blossoming into the bargain, but must still be urging them on to fruitful action, while as yet the choicest gift of God to them is this simple aspiration.

Nothing should be expected from these feeble folk save what is perfectly natural (as I think, who have had many children) and fitting for their childhood; and to imagine that they can never begin too soon to assume the cares and burdens of our life, if we can prevent it, is a terrible mistake. The Scriptures say, "It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth"; but I would make the yoke easy on the youth God intrusts to me, while on the child it should lie light as the white blossoms on the spray. The best fruitage in children of a tender age is simply to bloom, and to cherish their budding aspirations with most royal disregard as to what may become of them.

The heaven of our earliest life is white with these blossoms, which are of no use except to sweeten and make more beautiful the way on which we go dreaming in our youth. It is then that the giants are forever slain as they are never slain; and the little hand tingles and aches to get at the wolf, and the small slipper finds the fitting foot, and the cat is the best treasure on the ship, what time the bells have been chiming over Highgate Hill, and the children wander forever through the woods so sweetly forlorn until the bird whose breast became red trying to pluck the thorns from the brow of the blessed Christ comes through the green archways and covers them with leaves.

Leave them to their dreams, I say! Such things are the child's Bible. Leave them to their dreams! These are the blossoms on a tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself. God has made them as they are in his eternal goodness, as he makes the sapling simply to bloom until the years bring forth strength for bearing. Leave them their childhood sweet and free.

"They mingle with our life's ethereal part,
Sweetening and gathering sweetness evermore
By beauty's franchise disenthralled of time."

II. And, once more, when we grow to that estate in which it is to be expected we shall attain to something more than the tree which blossoms, but bears no fruit at all, you may notice how there is still in many natures, and very often in the finest, a splendid overplus of aspiration and intention which can never be more than as the overplus of blossom on the trees. I suppose, indeed, that now, when the elder men among us have learned some pregnant lessons on this matter, we can still tell of mornings that we were able to lay out a day's work ample enough to lead us to wonder, as the evening shadows fell, how we could have done so little when we meant to do so much, and were ready to cry with the old Roman, "I have lost a day!"

It is the eternal distinction Nature draws between the lusty blossoming and the moderate fruitage, set to the simplest experience and brought within a morning and an evening. But then it may be we can see, if we will, how the overplus of purpose had still this fine quality in it, after all, that we should neither have done so much, nor done that much so well, had we not risen and gone forth with this fine ambition to be doing boiling in our blood; and it was to the afternoon, when we began to feel the pull of the hard day, what the early rains are to the drought which lasts from mid June very often to September, filling all the springs, so that every root gets its share, and the mills are turned by the overplus in the woods and mountains.

So I imagine it is very seldom possible for those of a hopeful and aspiring nature to make the aspiration and hope of their youth come even with the fruitage of their manhood or womanhood, and least of all in those things which seem quite essential to the fulfilling of their life. Poor Haydon, the painter, I notice, breaks out in his youth into one great cloud of blossoming, when he dreamed he would storm the world by his genius and usher in the new great day of art. But then the trouble is this, that the dream of his youth becomes the misery and blight of his age simply because he never could or never would understand this open secret of the overplus of blossom. He did bear some good fruit; and, if he could have said, "Thank God for that: it is the best I can do, and I am content," he might have been a far happier man than he was, and waited for the angels to come and bear him away, instead of rushing out of life unbidden and before his time.

And so there are men and women everywhere who, when the strong tide smites them, catch this crown of splendid aspirations and wear it with a great, deep joy. They will write books the world must read; they will create things for which the world will go down on its knees, almost, to thank them, or take a first place in their profession and hold it against all odds, or make themselves seen and heard from an eminence no man may question, or make a fortune no disaster can pluck out of their hands. It is all very good to dream such dreams,—and there may be a true worth in us, pushing us on,—only this is the trouble, that I cannot take this truth into my heart, it may be, of ten blossoms to one good apple, and so all my later life is touched with disappointment. For I certainly have known men whose lives were made miserable by their failure to remember this lesson of the trees. They began their life as if they were quite sure that all they had to do was to just march on and storm the world,—men whose lives blossomed in the early days into the loveliest hopes and aspirations, but who found, when their spring was over, that much of this had come to naught; and then they could not feel that it was a divine thing at all that had befallen them. They imagined a globe would set in every cup and grow and ripen, and so the day came when the sweetness and light of their life left them; nor did they care that even what fruit they had on the tree should find the sun, and ripen the best it might, there seemed to be so little of it, and it looked so mean against the background of their early visions. And so a blight came on their whole career, and that was sour which might have been so sweet and good if they had but known this secret of the overplus of blossom.

III. We may see once more how this lapse between the blossom and the fruit may enter into the whole range of our life, to help us if we will but consider its law, or to hurt us beyond all measure if we will still insist on a fruit for every blossom.

The young man leaves his home in the spring tide of his life, and feels sure that, if he does his best, he will win a good place and do whatever he hungers and thirsts to do, to find at the end of twenty or thirty years that he is not at all the man he should have been if the fruitage had been equal to the blossom; and then he is in danger of growing bitter and doubtful, not about himself alone, but about the good providence of God, which, as he thinks, should have helped him to make his aspiration come true, or else have left him more moderately endowed with aspirations.

Now I would like to get hold of that man

and ask him to note what Nature has been doing in the woods and orchards this year, and then tell him it was a splendid thing to have the aspiration, and that was good fruit also of its kind; for, if he had been true at all to the inner impulse which crowned his youth with this fair crown, he had done far better than the man who did not aspire and did not care. There is always some good fruit, soon or late, from the blossoming in every one of us—just as much as we could carry, perhaps, if we could only fathom the whole secret. And so we should no more doubt God's providence because so much of the promise has fallen dead about us, than we doubt Nature's providence as she snows down her overplus of blossom about the roots of the trees.

This is the secret, again, of a true content in the life of the heart and the home. For not over many men and women, I suppose, have found that their wedded life answered completely to the dreams of their courtship; but in all the world you will not find a gracious or true-hearted man or woman who will not thank God for that overplus of blossom which came with the sweet, brave days, and was so divine while it lasted, or who will now enter a complaint against heaven because May does not quite match with October. That fine glamor, if I may touch my figure again, is like early rains: if they treasure it in their hearts for what it is worth and what it means, it may tide them over many a dry and dusty day, and still keep terms with them that a fair fruitage shall not be wanting when they come to the ingathering of the years.

If my experience is to be of any use, I think a thunderstorm even can do no great harm to this blossoming if it wax not too savage and relentless. I have known such storms to clear the atmosphere under the roof about as sweetly as they do above it; and, when again I hear of people who have lived together a good many years and never had the least difference, I wonder whether they have not had rather too much indifference for a true man and wife, and am ready to say with Paley, when he heard of such a pair, "It may have been verra bonny, but it must have been a little stupid." God help those who cannot let the fair, sweet bloom go for what it was worth, but must fret their life out over the vanished glory, or poison each other's existence with mutual regret because they cannot live to the end of their days in the sweetness and fragrance of the spring.

It is the lesson we have to learn once more through our saddest and most painful experiences.

Nothing can be more natural and beautiful than that the longing we feel touching the fair blossoming of our children should come to its full fruition, and yet for the most of us this can never be. The bloom fades and falls on which we have set our hearts,—that one peerless blossom, as it always seems, we loved best, because it was so beautiful and caught the light so winsomely. The trouble of its falling shakes the soul to its centre, and we often sorrow more for those that have gone than we rejoice for those that abide and fulfil all the promises of the spring. It is a long day, then, before we can thank God for their blooming that have faded, and say, He did indeed give us the blossoms. They could not stay, but they did come, and made May for us in their coming, and left the fragrance of May forever in our life.

Let the trees be my teachers if I will be taught in no diviner way, and nature tell me of God's grace if I will not hear the still, small voice. I stood one morning long ago by Niagara in the latter spring, watching the play of the great emerald on the heart of the greater falls as the sun smote it here and there, and the rainbow bent over the eternal white mist. It was a still morning, and, as I stood there alone, I was aware of an exquisite fragrance stealing across the cataracts I had never noticed in any visit before; and, wondering how this should be, I saw that over in Canada the trees were still all abloom, apple-trees in the orchards and blossoms on the wild bushes clinging to the cliffs, all white and crimson and gleaming through the greenery, and then I knew it was the brave overplus of blossom which was sending its fragrance on the wings of the soft June morning across the great chasm.

And so I have thought of these blossoms which bloom and fall on the tree of our human life and float their fragrance across the turmoil of the days and across the white mist and through the bow of our hope. Just a bloom, and no more, some of them, but still a bloom which abides with us while we stay on this side of the great river, as that sweet vision abides with me. Shall we not thank God, then, when we come to our better mind, for the blossoms which fall to so divine a purpose? Or shall this human sorrow prevent any sense of the divine glory, and my lifelong regret for their fading blind me to the divine love which lay in their exquisite advent and

grace? I would fain grow great enough, some time, to bless God even for his overplus of life in my home, and think of it as the outpouring of his heart on me for love's sake. I want to grasp a faith which will assure me he could not find it in his heart to give me only children, but would slip an angel here and there into my life in this sweet disguise. These I have with me might well anchor me too stoutly to the earth; but those I had with me may draw me wonderfully, if I will let them, toward the heavens where they wait and watch until I come.

IV. And then, if I turn on myself and say, "What is my hope of this blessed life to come, when my life here is but little better than a broken trust, turn where I will, ten resolutions broken where one is made good, the wrecks of undone or half-done duties strewing themselves over the roots of my life, the very hopes and anticipations of the better life not what they were at all in the brave outbreaking of my spring, and my whole manhood or womanhood poor and scant to weeping, compared with what I once thought it might be?"

Well, if even this is my trouble, I will not be overtroubled. The splendid hopes and aspirations of the soul's life are all beautiful and all good, as the overplus of blossom is, though there be but scant fruit from them after all to my poor thinking.

I will tell my heart, then, how God knows better than we know what we are able to bear on to the harvest, what harsh winds, also, from which there was no shelter, may have blown on the tree, and what fatalities from the old years before we came here to live our life may have hidden themselves, God help us! in the setting fruit, to smite it with a withering.

I will rest me in the parable of the overplus of blossom. I will say, I am more than many trees. I will stand within the law of their life, and they shall stand within the law of mine. I will not be troubled or dismayed overmuch because this poverty has come where I looked for wealth. With these unattained desires and these withered aspirations I will not be over-troubled. I will not give way to despair. I will say to my soul, "If that bush, afire with the spring splendor, could so storm one poor, halting man in Midian that it seemed as if God spake verily to him out of the bush, and the fruit of that blossoming was for the deliverance of a nation and the help of the world, then my fair hopes and aspirations, which have come to such scant fruitage as I look at them now, may have been fruit in their own time to others who needed just such a pulse of inspiration and aspiration to help them on their way as I had in my nature when it was all radiant with the blossoming of my spring." God knows beyond all my knowing, and he alone can measure the lapse between the blossom and the fruit.

Let me stay sweet and trustful, then, and do the best I may on to the fall of my year; and then I will sing:—

"I know these blossoms clustering heavily
The evening dew upon their faded leaves,
Can claim small value or utility,
Therefore shall fragrancy and beauty be
The glory of my sheaves."

—*Robert Collyer.*

THE STILL HOUR.

O Love divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear!
On thee we cast each earth-born care:
We smile at pain while thou art near.

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread;
Ours hearts still whispering, Thou art near

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near.

On thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love divine, forever dear!
Content to suffer, while we know,
Living or dying, thou art near.

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

We stand upon the shore and watch the ever-changing sea, the ceaseless rise and fall of the billows,—this mighty, surging mass of water that for countless ages has beat against this coast, obeying the same unchangeable laws. We lift our eyes to the heavens, and there, marshalled in all their glory, unnumbered stars look down and speak to us of worlds all unknown. We pick the tiny flower, so minute and yet so perfect in all its parts, so beautiful in its completeness, and over our spirits comes a hush, and we bow before the majesty of his presence. God has planted deep in every human heart the seed of reverence, and well has he surrounded it with things favorable for its growth.

We are told that Moses saw the Lord in the burning bush: but not alone to Moses and the

olden time, but here and now, to you and to me, comes the glorious vision, if only our eyes are rightly anointed. Even as to them of old speaks he to us. He speaks through all great souls in all times, he speaks to us in the whirlpool, he speaks to us in the earthquake; but most plainly of all speaks he in that still small voice of our souls. Happy is he who so possesses his spirit in quietness and peace that that gentle voice is ever heard. We catch faint glimpses of the glory of our God. We hear faint echoes of his voice, and bow down in awe before him. But to make this reverence perfect, there must be combined with the awe another quality, —love. God holds the worlds in their places The winds and the waves obey his will; but yet not a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge, and the very hairs of our head are numbered. The Jews recognized the power and might of God, and feared and worshipped him. Christ came to show us the Pather. He taught us that even more wonderful and mighty than his power and majesty is his never-ending love,—that love which encompasseth all his children, however far they may stray from him.

This, it seems to me, is the keynote of all reverence. If I can only feel that God loves each one of us, not as a part of the universe, but as an individual, that he placed us here to do a certain work,—a work that is necessary for the perfect completing of his plan,— that every hardship or sorrow that comes to us is sent because he loves us, that he surrounds us with all our many joys and blessings because he loves to see us happy. When we think of God as our Father, in our very heart of hearts, and give him our deepest love, do you think then his name will ever be lightly spoken? As we go to those we love with all our joys, knowing they will be glad and rejoice with us and gain comfort by telling them our sorrows, so just as naturally shall we turn to our heavenly Friend. We are conscious of the love of our friends at all times; but how gladly do we devote many quiet hours in writing or talking to them! Then shall we not, each one of us, say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord"? We bow down and veil our faces before the outward manifestation of his presence; but, when upon our spirit dawns the inner manifestation, the deeper revelation of his love, it will be like the coming of the spring, like the bursting forth of the glorious sun, and will cause that seed of the goodness which lies in every human soul to blossom and bring forth fruit in loving words and kind deeds. "We love him because he first loved us"; and, if we love him, then shall we seek to know his truth and to do his will. O friends, may we open our eyes and see the beauty of our Lord, may we open our ears and hear the sound of his voice, may we open our hearts and receive his never-failing love! Then shall our every act at all times and in all places bring forth reverence.—*Sarah C. Faunce.*

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2. Mrs. M. M. Collins, Tolar, Texas, R. F. D. 2, will be glad of magazines.

3. Miss Camilla Lewis, Route 2, Athens, Texas, a girl in poor health, who keeps house for her father and brother, her mother not living, asks for reading, and especially McCall's fashion sheet.

4. Miss Annie L. Phillips, whose school address has been Spilman, West Virginia, is now at her home, Pleasant View, Amherst County, Virginia. She has received the January and February numbers of *Scribner* from a friend who did not give her name, and she is very anxious to receive all the series, so as to read Mr. Page's serial, "John Marvel, Assistant." She will be very glad indeed of any current numbers of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and the standard magazines, and of any books, especially "The Awakening of Helena Ritchie," "Sir Richard Calmody," "A Golden Rose," "The Metropolis," or any novels by Marion Harland, Christian Reid, George Meredith, Mrs. Burnett, Amélie Rives, or Maurice Hewlett *except* "Richard Yea and Nay." She is entirely without access to any sort of library, and divides all reading matter sent her most widely, even sending a good deal off by mail to other States. She is also very anxious for any works, either of fiction or history, relating to France from Louis XV. through the career of Napoleon and that of his family connections. She would be very glad of any of Miss Mühlbach's books on the subject, or those of any other author. She sends many thanks to the Society, and warmest wishes for its continued success, hoping that its members may be cheered by the knowledge of the far-reaching pleasure and help it is continually giving to so many. Address, Miss Annie L. Phillips, Pleasant View, Amherst County, Virginia.

5. Mrs. J. B. Roberson, Dodson, Patrick County, Virginia, R. F. D. 1, is in poor health and often feels discouraged; and only for the comfort she receives from those she never sees she hardly knows how she would live. She asks that we still remember her with reading and letters. Her letter came too late for her birthday on June 29th.

6. Mrs. Ollie Lee Garris and her mother, Mrs. Eliza Lee, have moved from Concord, North Carolina, to Polkton, North Carolina, R. F. D. 2. Mrs. Lee is nearly blind now, but her daughter reads to her.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

THE GLORIOUS FOURTH.

Five thousand families are plunged into grief or anxiety each year, on the average, because of our idea of Fourth of July patriotism, and in one year alone over four score of young boys went through the fearful sufferings of the dreaded lockjaw to an untimely death. Those of us whose family circles have not been touched by lockjaw little realize what this deadly disease—deadly because it is beyond medical skill—means.

We call this celebrating a glorious day. And we who are parents are directly responsible for such casualties and their consequent sufferings. We cannot expect reasoning or common sense from the young on such a question as this: it is for us elders to decree that this annual blot of suffering and death shall be wiped out. No patriotism that is worth the snap of a finger is expressed in setting off gunpowder. But we ourselves must first reach a mental attitude of conviction that our present mode of celebrating the day is absolutely futile and dangerous before we can remove the idea from the minds of our children. It is not that we need laws to prevent the sale of firearms to children, so much as we need common sense among parents that shall forbid the purchase of them for themselves and for their children, and the substitution of more rational forms of celebration. The manufacture and sale of fireworks will cease the moment the public refuses to buy them. This is for each of us to do ourselves, and no finer Fourth save the original one would there be in our history if this year all parents made an individual matter of it and saw to it personally that no fireworks of any kind reached the hands of their children. That would be a Fourth of July worth celebrating—a Fourth with no young lives sacrificed to a custom that we should have outgrown long ago, and which has come to be a disgrace rather than a credit to a nation of enlightened people.—*The Ladies' Home Journal, June*, 1907.

A SULKY CHILD.*

She was on her way to Emmeline, when she found Janet sitting on a step at the top of the stairs, with her finger on her lip.

"Janet, dear, I have not seen you before," said Kate in her universal benevolence; but at that moment the voice of Clements, the ladies' maid, exclaimed, "Miss Willoughby is naughty, Miss Katherine!"

"Oh," said Kate, "I am very sorry to hear it: I hope you will soon be good, Janet, dear. Won't you try?"

Janet sat down again with a dogged look, and put her finger up as before.

"Oh, that is very sad," said Kate. "I can't stop to talk to sulky little girls: I must go on to Emmeline."

Janet still sat as if she cared not a straw for any of them, so Kate proceeded to her

*One of the brothers had been drowned by an accident, and three others had narrowly escaped death.

sister's room. Emmeline was much the same; and, as the nurse was now ready to come and help in her room, Kate begged Miss Townsend to go and take a little rest. Miss Townsend thanked her, and went; but there was another word to the matter. Clements, the ladies' maid, did not at all like having the charge at once of Janet and Cecilia, and Miss Townsend had scarcely come to the end of the passage before she was met with the renewed accusation of "Miss Willoughby being a very naughty child," and there stood Janet leaning against the wall, the very personification, apparently, of sulkiness. "Yes, there she stands," proceeded Clements. "Not a word I can say will she mind. She does not care for all the trouble in the house, not a bit. I do believe it is all jealousy of her poor little brother that has been almost drowned."

"Come with me, Janet," said Miss Townsend; and Janet followed her to the schoolroom without looking up. "What is this, Janet?" asked she. "Have you been disobedient?"

Janet raised her face, and murmured, "I did not mean it."

The child did not understand her own feelings. She had learned that Frank was dead through the gossiping converse of the maids, and her natural reserve prevented her from asking or saying one word to such unsympathizing people. There was a dead, aching, sorrowful, wondering feeling, heavy at her childish heart, and she tried to shake it off by playing with Cecilia. Then the maids scolded her for having no feeling for her dear brother, and that doubly wounded and hardened the poor child. Next came the hero, Edwin, too triumphant in the pride of the petting of his mamma and all the maids, to care much for Janet's kisses. She hung back, and the dark thought that all were loved save herself overshadowed her again. The maids told her she was jealous. The name fitted the latent feeling of which she was conscious. Janet put her finger up to her lip, and there was an end of aught but hardening and bitterness and self-pity. Kate was like the rest of them, and poor Janet was dull, dry, hard.

The first thing that broke on the heavy dream was when, as she stood before her governess, Miss Townsend looked into her face, and said, "My dear, have you thanked God for his love in saving your dear brother Edwin and your sisters?"

"Let me," said Janet, not warmly, for nothing chills a child more than to be accused of being cold;* but Miss Townsend would not notice this, and the little girl knelt down by her while she dictated a few simple words of thanksgiving. It was a softened face that Janet raised up from her clasped hands, but all she said was a question whether she was to do any lessons to-day?

"I am afraid, my dear," said Miss Townsend, "that I can hardly hear you to-day. Your sister Emmeline is so ill that I have been up all night with her; and now I am afraid that, if I do not rest, I shall be too tired to be of any use to her by and by."

"Are you so tired?" said Janet.

"Yes, rather, my dear, and so I should like to make you my useful little woman."

"Oh, how?" and Janet's face lighted up, and lost its heavy, discontented look.

"First, I should like to lie down on the sofa, if you will fetch my plaid shawl to cover me up." Said and done in a moment, and very pretty it was to see the carefulness with which the little girl spread out the shawl and turned down the folds.

"Are you comfortable now?" she asked.

"Yes, very: this is very nice, my dear little nurse. And now I think I might go to sleep if you would read to me. Get one of your little books, and read to me nicely. "And then another thing, Janet dear: you must keep the door open and listen, and wake me as soon as ever you hear your sister Kate or any one coming out of Miss Berners' room. Thank you."

Janet moved about on tiptoe, grave, subdued, but feeling herself important, and, though sadness hung on her, with a gentle and loving spirit stifling the jealousy and sense of injustice that ached within her. She did not read so that it was much pleasure to hear her; and without her Miss Townsend could have rested much more quietly and comfortably; but when, after a half-waking, weary, dreamy sleep of two hours, the governess awoke and saw that the little slight figure had not moved and the brown eyes were watching her intently, her own lonely heart thrilled with fondness, and she sighed to think of the depths of love unstirred by those who ought to have made them sunshine instead of gloom.—*"The Castle Builders," by C. M. Yonge.*

* Let mothers heed this warning.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE NEST IN THE GUTTER.

On the morning of June 30 my little girl informed me that she had seen a bird's-nest on the roof of the house. I went out to investigate, thinking that an English sparrow

had probably chosen the gutter for its nesting site; but I was much surprised to see the white-tipped tail and black bill of a kingbird projecting from the sides of a nest which was closely fitted into one end of the gutter. This suggested one of the first steps in the process of evolution by which the kingbird may change its nesting habits to adapt them to the advent of man, as its cousin, the phœbe, and other birds have already done. I had seen a kingbird keeping watch in a neighboring orchard, but I had not supposed its nest was so near. As I was watching, one of the birds flew to the edge of the nest, and, after waiting till its mate had come and settled on the eggs, flew away.

Lest the birds might be frightened away, I decided to make no examination of the nest till the young had hatched. During the following week a bird was almost constantly on the nest. Several times I observed the bird on the nest being fed by its mate, and from my observations I judged this to be the way in which the bird usually obtained its food. On one occasion, the birds changed places on the nest.

On July 6 I first saw the yellow bills of the young appear over the edge of the nest, while the parent was standing by with outspread wings to shield the young from the intense rays of the midday sun. I then ventured for the first time to look into the nest, using a long ladder reaching to the eaves. As I ascended the ladder and came near the nest, both birds flew furiously around me, uttering loud cries and dashing at my head with a whir of wings and snap of the bill which suggested an unpleasant experience in case the birds came nearer. The nest contained four little ones, covered with a soft white coating of long fluffy down, looking like so many balls of freshly combed cotton.

During the first part of the day my presence near the corner of the house, even while on the ground, was sufficient cause for the birds to fly around, uttering cries of alarm; but later in the day they became quiet, so that I was able to remain near without disturbing them. That the birds might become accustomed to the ladder, I left it near the nest for the first day; on the following forenoon a tripod was attached to the ladder, and in the afternoon the camera was set up and the first picture taken, using a long piece of linen thread to snap the shutter. Although the birds flew at me fiercely while working at the camera, yet no sooner had I reached the ground than one of them was at the nest.

The day was an exceeding hot one, and the parents spent most of the time during the middle of the day standing over the nest with wings outspread, to shield the young from the hot sun, themselves panting, meanwhile, with wide-opened bill. After I had taken the first picture the bird remained standing quietly over the nest while I changed the plates, focussed the camera, and snapped the shutter for another exposure.

Pictures were taken every two or three days; but, the longer I worked with the birds, the more fierce became their attacks upon me, quite in contrast with a pair of chickadees with which I had been working a few days before, which came and fed their young without paying any attention to me while I was standing near, arranging the camera. After the second day, whenever I approached near enough the nest to set up the camera, the kingbirds flew at me furiously, poising themselves above me and then darting quickly at my head, now coming near enough to strike me with their bills. In no case was blood drawn, but, as they usually struck about the same spot each time, I was glad of an excuse to cover my head with a cloth while focussing the camera. Their rage seemed to grow from day to day, and on the morning of the fifth day my appearance outdoors was the signal for both birds to hover over my head and utter loud cries, while waiting for an opportunity to dart down at me. In the afternoon of the same day, while I was watching the birds from a distance of about fifty feet, one of them, which had been standing on the gutter near the nest, suddenly made a dash straight for my head with such speed and quickness that I barely had time to throw up my arm to ward off the attack. They never attacked me unless both birds were present, and even then only one came near enough to strike me.

An occurrence on the fourth day, which might have resulted in a tragedy, doubtless tended to strengthen the feeling of antagonism which the birds displayed. It was an extremely hot day, and, as there were no trees near the house, I fastened a bough of a tree to the ladder in such a way as to shade the nest. Although the birds attacked me vigorously as usual, I thought that the shade might prove just as grateful even if furnished against their will. During the afternoon a terrific thunderstorm arose, in which the rain fell in torrents and was accompanied by a gale of wind which blew the bough and ladder past the nest, tearing off one of the shingles near. After the storm I looked at the nesting site, expecting to find that the torrents had washed the nest and young from the gutter; but, fortunately, everything was as usual, and apparently

both nest and young were in as good condition as ever.

The food given the young seemed to consist chiefly of small insects, too small to be identified, even with a powerful field glass. Occasionally a mulberry was brought from a neighboring tree. During the second day the parents spent most of their time standing over the nest with outstretched wings, to protect the young from the sun's rays. During the middle of the day the young were fed only occasionally, but later in the day they were fed oftener; but still they were shielded by the parents, who changed their position a little to one side, as the sun sank nearer the horizon. Likewise, on the forenoon of the fourth day, the morning being very hot, the attention of the parents was given to hovering the young rather than to feeding them. Later in the forenoon, when the sky became clouded, they stopped hovering and fed the young oftener. This was the last day that the birds were observed to shield the young from the heat of the sun.

The work of feeding the young was about equally shared by both birds, who showed themselves in this, as in others ways, a loyal and devoted couple. After feeding the young birds, the parents would frequently remain standing on the gutter shielding the nest, or at some point near, till its mate returned.

The frequency of feeding seemed to depend on the age of the young, the kind of day, and the time of day. The older the young grew, the oftener they were fed. During the first few days they were fed oftener on a cloudy day and less often during the middle of the hot days, the attention of the parents being engaged in protecting the young from the sun's rays.

Observations were made every few days on the feeding habits for periods ranging from thirty minutes to two hours, with the following results:—

Day	*Kind of day*	*Time of Day*	*Times fed in an hour*
Second	Very hot	Noon	10
Fourth	Very hot	Middle of forenoon	15
Sixth	Medium	Last of forenoon	16
Eighth	Medium	Middle of afternoon	20
Ninth	Medium	Middle of forenoon	25

Frequently food was brought so often by the parents that one was obliged to wait near the nest till its mate had finished disposing of the provisions which it was parcelling out to four hungry mouths.

On July 16, when ten days old, the first bird left the nest, and on the forenoon of the next day the other three, one at a time, flew off to a neighboring tree. My camera was set up ready to take a picture of the last, and I was just about to push the shutter when he made a sudden departure and disappeared among the foliage of a neighboring maple. Later in the day, however, I found him again and placed him back in the nest, having first prepared the camera so that I might lose no time in taking his picture. But my haste proved uncalled for, as he was in no hurry to leave again, but apparently glad to return home once more after his first experience out in the great wide world. He remained there all the rest of the afternoon, as motionless as the gutter upon which he perched. And, when at dusk I passed by, his white breast and throat stood out as a conspicuous landmark of the old homestead in whose narrow confines his life thus far had been spent. In the morning he was gone, and only the bare nest remained as a reminder of an interesting family history.

The family was seen frequently around the orchard, and, after the young had been out of the nest a week, the whole family of six was discovered in an apple-tree. The young remained here for a half-hour and during that interval were fed ten times by the parents. They then flew away and scattered among the neighboring trees.

Although there were no color markings to distinguish the sexes, yet the two showed sufficient differences in habit to be told apart. Most of the incubating was done by one bird, which presumably was the female. After the young were hatched, one showed more persistence in remaining at the nest when I was near, and only one when attacking me came near enough to strike me. This one I also took to be the female. And, when approaching the nest, there was a difference in the number of call notes uttered by each.

This pair showed none of the reputed pugnacity of the kingbird toward other birds. Eight to ten species of birds commonly frequented the house and trees near, the audacious English sparrow even perching on the eaves near the nest; but the kingbirds made no attempt to drive the other birds away. Several other nests of kingbirds were discovered in the vicinity, and their occupants showed the same tolerance toward other birds and the same pugnacity toward human beings. The crow was the only bird that I saw the kingbirds chasing.

After the young had left the nest, I removed it and examined the material of which it was composed. The nest was boat-shaped in appearance, following the outline of the gutter. On the outside was a mass of coarse material, consisting of strings, cotton, three kinds of cloth, a long piece of

narrow tape, some knit goods, a piece of linen, feathers, dried grass, rootlets, and heads of several kinds of composite flowers. Inside of this skeleton was a fine meshwork of rootlets completely lining the coarser material, inside of this was a layer of rather coarse grasses, and in this on the bottom of the nest were a few horsehairs. Thus there were four distinct layers, the coarse material on the outside, the net of rootlets, the layer of grass stems, and the scattering of hairs. Other nests found in the vicinity agreed in having this fine network of rootlets as one of the middle layers.

The feature of special interest about the nest was the large amount of such material as strings, pieces of cloth, etc., as suggesting that much may be done to induce birds to nest around our houses by exposing in appropriate places during the nesting season such materials as birds are found to use in nest building.—*Gilbert H. Trafton.*

THE CRY OF "MAD DOG."

Of all the minor forms of panic hardly any is less rational and more reprehensible than that which takes the form of assuming that every hunted, teased, tormented, or ill-cared-for dog is mad and must be pursued with relentless ferocity. In South Boston a dog was chased by a mob of boys and young men, and, being cornered at last, bit at the hand outstretched to seize him, and inflicted some slight scratches. It is pertinent to inquire whether a human under like circumstances would have acted with less energy in a way of self-defence.

A woman from Long Island City was taken to the German hospital in New York, suffering, as she supposed, from hydrophobia. She had beaten a dog and had been slightly bitten, and her friends had made her believe that she would die of rabies. Within an hour after reaching the hospital she died, but not from hydrophobia. The physicians declared that she had been frightened to death.

It is well to repeat for the thousandth time that rabies is an exceedingly uncommon disease, and that a genuinely mad dog is a rarity. It is almost never that a supposed mad dog suffers from anything more serious than temporary physical indisposition, until a crowd of hoodlums have made him not less mad than a human being would be under like circumstances, by annoying him to the point of torture.—*From editorial page of Boston Globe.*

Our officers have investigated a considerable number of cases of alleged rabies without finding any certain evidence that there was any rabies at all. For instance, once the newspapers stated that a little girl living in Malden, giving the name of the girl and the street where she lived, had been attacked by a mad dog which bit a piece out of her cheek. It was a fearful story, and we sent an officer at once to investigate. The Malden police knew nothing about the matter, there was no such family living on the street, and never had been so far as could be ascertained, and yet the case was very likely reported over the country in hundreds of newspapers.—*George T. Angell, in Our Dumb Animals.*

BIOGRAPHY.

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

A hundred years ago the literary world of London and Paris associated the name of Helen Maria Williams with the French Revolution. Now she is more truly known as the author of the hymn,

"While thee I seek, Protecting Power,
Be my vain wishes stilled."

Her father, Charles Williams, was an officer in the army. He was allied to a family of merchants of Rochelle, France, established in Great Britain since 1685, when Louis XIV. revoked the Edict of Nantes, granted in 1598 by Henry IV., for the toleration of Protestants.

Her mother must have been a sister of David Hay, a colonel in the English army, who went back for his Bible when Port Mahon surrendered to the French in 1756. This Bible was very dear to Helen Williams, who called it Monique's Bible. It was presented to the Society of the History of Protestantism in Paris in 1875.

The Hay family came to England with William the Conqueror, and his son conferred on William de Hays the extensive lands of Erroll in County Perth. The name of his wife was Helen.

Before 1309 Robert Bruce had made Gilbert the Earl of Erroll, high constable of Scotland, the highest subject next to the blood royal. His son, the next earl, was named David. The present Earl of Erroll is the twenty-third high constable of Scotland.

At Berwick-on-Tweed Mrs. Williams educated her three daughters, Helen, Cecilia, and Persis, with classic culture and reli-

gious freedom derived from Scotch Covenanters and French Huguenots.

In order to occupy solitary hours caused by delicate health, Helen began to write, at the suggestion of Dr. Andrew Kippis, who was then bringing out his Biographia Britannica. One day she submitted to his judgment her Legendary Poem on Edwin and Eltruda. He declared that it deserved to be committed to the press. In 1782 it was published, and met with success, which led the family to remove to London before April 24, 1784. Helen was at Grange Hill, Essex, when she wrote one of her poems. In 1786 she published two volumes of poems, dedicated to the Queen, for which 1,547 subscribers gave their names,—the Prince of Wales, Warren Hastings, John Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, Charles Matthews, Joanna Baillie, Hannah More, Horace Walpole, and many titled names.

To Sensibility she writes:—

"Though wounded by some vulgar mind
Unconscious of the deed,
Who never seeks a wound to bind,
But wonders why they bleed,
She oft will heave a secret sigh,
Will shed a lonely tear
O'er feelings nature wrought so high,
And gave on terms so dear.
Yet who would hard Indifference choose
Whose breast no tears can steep?
Who, for her apathy, would lose
The sacred power to weep?"

* Perhaps a cause for tears is revealed by her

SONG.

No riches from his scanty store
My lover could impart;
He gave a boon I valued more—
He gave me all his heart.

His soul sincere, his generous worth
Might well this bosom move;
And, when I asked for bliss on earth,
I only meant his love.

But now afar in search of gain
From shore to shore he flies;
Why wander riches to obtain,
When love is all I prize?

The frugal meal, the lowly cot,
If bless'd, my love, with thee,
That simple fare, that humble lot
Were more than wealth to me.

While he the dangerous ocean braves,
My tears but vainly flow;
Is pity in the faithless waves
To which I pour my woe?

*Tune, "The Winds that waft my Sighs to Thee."

The night is dark, the waters deep,
Yet soft the billows roll;
Alas! at every breeze I weep;
The storm is in my soul.

Before she was twenty-four, the child that asks had grown into the woman who gives, and she could say,—

"My lifted eye without a tear
The lowering storm shall see;
My steadfast heart shall know no fear,
That heart will rest on Thee!"

The "lowering storm" into which this gentle English girl was whirled during the next decade was betrayed in 1785 by only a few flashes from a diamond necklace. A lady then visiting Miss Williams in London desired to have French lessons, and Mme. du Fossé was recommended for the purpose. Miss Williams says in the volume of weekly letters from France to England, printed in 1794: "We soon perceived in her conversation every mark of a cultivated mind and of an amiable disposition. She at length told us the history of her misfortunes, with the pathetic eloquence of her own charming language; and, after having heard that recital, it required but common humanity to treat her with the respect due to the unhappy, and to feel for her sorrows that sympathy to which they had such claim. How much has the sensibility of M. and Mme. du F. overrated those proofs of esteem and friendship which we were enabled to shew them in their adversity!" The eldest son of the Baron du Fossé, Counsellor of the Parliament of Normandy, had married his mother's companion, Monique Coquerel, the daughter of a gardener-florist. The baron was absent in Holland, but they heard that he intended to separate and imprison them. They escaped to Geneva, Lausanne, and in 1775 to England, where they almost perished with cold and hunger in the depth of a severe winter. With their new-born infant they were told they must leave the lodgings for which they could not pay. Early in the morning M. du Fossé was stopped in the street by a gentleman whom he had known in Geneva, who was then in search of his lodging, having a letter for him from a Genevois clergyman, who had transmitted ten guineas to a banker in London, as a testimony of friendship. They obtained situations as teachers, and two years passed, when they were again plunged into the deepest distress. A French jeweller was commissioned by the Baron du Fossé to go to his son and propose to him conditions of reconciliation.

In June, 1778, M. du Fossé returned to Normandy. At midnight, July 7, his father, with three men, conducted him to St. Yon, a convent near Rouen, where he was thrown into a dungeon. On the 10th of October, 1780, the Baron came to the convent and ordered the monks to show his son to the parlor, where the son again refused to desert his wife. Escaping from the father's blows, he rushed to the top of the building and threw himself into the street, where a passer-by washed the blood and dust from his face, and recognized him. The monks dragged him back to the convent, where he remained insensible for weeks, in agony for months; but he recovered from four broken bones and countless bruises. The parliament of Rouen struggled in vain to rescue him from his father's tyranny, but a magistrate assisted him to escape to England.

These misfortunes caused Miss Williams to receive this family in her home at Aberconway, Wales, some of the time between 1785 and 1789, and later "to love, as well as to admire, the revolution which chased every cloud of calamity from the dwelling of M. du Fossé, who returned to France on the 15th of July, 1789, and invited the Williams family to visit them in Normandy, his parents being dead."

Concluding their memoir, Miss Williams writes: "Has it not the air of a romance? And are you not glad the dénouement is happy? Does not the old Baron die in exactly the right place, at the very page where one would choose? He would have sickened at the idea of general happiness. He would have abhorred a country where iron cages were broken down, where dungeons were thrown open, and where justice was henceforth to shed a clear and steady light."

Miss Williams, her mother, and her sister had means to accept this invitation from the sale of the poems, perhaps increased by the issue in 1788 of her poem on the "Bill Passed for Regulating the Slave Trade." They arrived in Paris the 13th of July, the day before the Bastile was taken and destroyed by a general insurrection of the people; and they saw the august spectacle of federation uniting the people and the aristocracy to the monarchy, the first stage of the revolution. She joined the universal voice, and repeated with all her heart and soul, "Vive la Nation." The national oath was taken throughout the kingdom at noon.

She visited Mme. Sillery, generally called by her husband's earlier title, Genlis. Her pupils were the children of M. d'Orléans, amiable and charming. After seeing Paris, evidently with M. du Fossé, they went to Rouen, Forges, finally to his château in Normandy.

Though he had become a Protestant, he celebrated the day of his patron saint, Augustin, by a fête, of which Miss Williams says, "A more joyous scene or a set of happier countenances my eyes never beheld.

At supper a young Frenchman was seated between my sister and me, to whom Mme. du Fossé said, 'You are well placed, sir.' In a style truly French, he answered, 'I am made happy, Madame, for the first time, at three-and-twenty years of age.'" I fancy that was the lady's nephew Athanase M. Coquerel, who married Cecilia Williams in 1794.

Early in September the travellers return to England, where "every visitor brings intelligence from France full of dismay and horror."

In 1790 a novel, in two volumes, "Julia," is published, and Miss Williams again visits at the château in Normandy. After spending the autumn in Orleans, in December she goes to Paris for the winter, where she finds several different sects of patriots, who discuss with vehemence every point argued in the National Assembly. She says: "I was at the Jacobins when the English, French, and American colors, fastened together with bands of laurel and national ribbons, were placed in the hall. Every heart seemed animated with a sacred enthusiasm, and every eye was melted with tears. In France talents and patriotism are in strict alliance. I go frequently to a spacious church which the French Protestants have lately purchased. I wish our English clergy would sometimes address their discourses to the feelings, as well as to the understanding. It is not the reasoning, but the sentimental part of religion that softens every evil to which humanity is subject, that soothes the troubled spirit and heals the broken heart."

In April they went to Montreuil-sur-Mer for a few weeks on the way to England.

Jan. 25, 1793, from Paris, she writes: "Imagination contemplates with overwhelming emotion, that extraordinary vicissitude of fortune which conducted Louis XVI. from the radiant Palace of Versailles to the gloomy Tower of the Temple,—from the first throne of Europe to the scaffold and the block. At the head of this band of conspirators is Robespierre—a disappointed wit." Left an orphan at an early age, he received a liberal education from the Bishop of Arras. At sixteen he took every prize, and was sent to Paris, ex-

pecting to become the most brilliant of orators. On the contrary, the trial proved such lack of talent that the bishop ordered him to return to Arras and earn his living as a lawyer. From this time he abhorred men of talent, especially statesmen. He considered the applause at the theatre as something of which his harangues were defrauded. The jealousy of Marat was directed against men of science,—Volta, Newton, Franklin,—until the Bastile was overthrown, when he found courage to preach massacre and pillage.

The great characters who began the revolution have either disappeared or are reduced to silence and obscurity. The cultivated minds and enlightened conversation that animated the salon of Miss Williams nearly every evening of this winter and spring were dissipated in gloom. One evening, Bernardin de St. Pierre, author of the charming little novel "Paul and Virginia," was drinking tea with her, describing lovely scenes in Mauritius. A friend rushed into the room, and with great agitation told of a decree ordering all the English in France to be arrested and their property confiscated.

At two the next morning, two commissaries of the revolutionary committee, accompanied by a guard with drawn swords, conducted Mrs. Williams and her two daughters to prison in the Luxembourg. The next morning Helen mounted on a table to look through the grated windows on the beautiful gardens. In turn they lighted fires, swept the rooms with a broom which they borrowed from a countess, arranged the beds, and prepared their meals. A tea-kettle, with which a friend furnished her mother, was "never allowed time to cool, but was employed from morning till night in furnishing the English with tea." The walls were hung with tapestry, which described a landscape of romantic beauty, on which she often gazed till she almost persuaded herself that the scenery was alive. Two members of the convention, Sillery and La Source, occupied adjoining apartments, two persons in whose society they "had passed some of the most agreeable hours of their residence in France. Liberty in the soul of La Source was less a principle than a passion, for his bosom beat high with philanthropy; and in his former situation as a Protestant minister he had felt in a peculiar manner the oppression of the ancient system."

An outer door locked in these three apartments at night. When La Source and Sillery came to Mrs. Williams' apartment for family worship, they related all that had passed during their trial before the revolutionary tribunal, which brought them to the scaffold, with nineteen other deputies,—a fate from which Helen Williams was probably sheltered only because she was already imprisoned in consequence of the law against the English. She writes: "During the spring preceding the fatal 31st of May, when the deputies of the Gironde and Garrère passed most of their evenings at our house, I had not concealed that I was employed in writing some letters which have since been published in England, in which I had drawn the portrait of the tyrant in those dark shades of coloring that belonged to his hideous nature; and Garrère, in whose power my life was placed, was now the lacquey of Robespierre, and the great inquisitor of the English at Paris. Very soon after the 31st of May, upon our refusing to receive some deputies of the mountain whom he asked leave to introduce to us, he abandoned us altogether."

"Thus I passed the winter at Paris with the knife of the guillotine suspended over me by a frail thread, when a singular opportunity of escape presented itself, and with the assistance of M. Athanase M. Coquerel, I fled alone to Switzerland, with a heart almost broken by the crimes I had witnessed and the calamities I had shared. At Basle I was in safety, but an exile. My friends in England returned no answers to my letters. An Act of Parliament stopped our resources from England: our property in France was confiscated. At this time M. and Mme. du Fossé wrote to tell us that their fortune was at our disposal.

"With what overwhelming sensations did I receive the tidings of the fall of Robespierre [28th July, 1794], which was to change the color of my life, and give peace and consolation to so many of my fellow-creatures. After waiting till the struggle maintained by the Jacobins against the national representation had happily ended, I returned to Paris."

While in prison Miss Williams had translated St. Pierre's novel, "Paul and Virginia," which has been ranked among English classics.

Feb. 12, 1798, she wrote a letter to Dr. Priestley, in America on the news in France.

"Sketches of Manners and Opinions in the French Republic" was published by Horace Walpole, Fonthill, 1801. The original price was five shillings, but the book has sold for seventeen shillings, and is rare. It relates the sudden death of Cecilia, the "beloved sister, born her friend, gifted with the most amiable qualities and possessing many accomplishments." Her sorrowing husband was the father of two infant

sons, Athanase Laurent and Charles Augustin Coquerel. Their grandmother and aunt Persis gave them the tenderest care. As their father did not long survive his wife, their aunt Helen adopted them as her own children, and France became her home.

Two volumes of "Letters from Switzerland" were published, including a hymn written among the Alps, which was later printed separately in England from an autograph copy which was for many years the property of Sydney, Lady Morgan.

This is the first stanza:—

"Creation's God! with thought elate,
Thy hand divine I see,
Impressed on scenes where all is great,
Where all is full of Thee!"

The twenty-second and last stanza reads:

"In every scene, where every hour
Sheds some terrific grace,
In nature's vast, o'erwhelming power
Thee, Thee, my God, I trace."

In 1797 Miss Williams was in Basle, of which she writes that it is the city of clubs. The ladies, abandoned by the men, follow their example, and meet from three to eight P.M. From infancy sisters whose ages differ three or four years have their separate coteries in the same house. Embroidery and conversation, cards and refreshments fill up these social hours.

In 1802 book speculators issued at Paris two volumes containing the "Political and Confidential Correspondence of Louis XVI." Miss Williams believed it authentic. She gave it an English translation, printed at London the same year. She joined to each letter observations which strongly shocked the royalists.

In 1808 a selection from the poems of Miss Williams had the good fortune to be put in verse by two members of the Academy, de Boufflers and Esmenard. Out of thirty poems contained in the volume, the first of these littérateurs has translated twenty-three.

In 1815 was published by Miss Williams "A Narrative of the Events which have taken Place in France from the Landing of Napoleon Bonaparte on the 1st of March, 1815, till the Restoration of Louis XVIII., 8th of July, 1815." 750 copies of this book were reprinted at the Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., in 1895, for the Burrows Brothers Company of Cleveland.

"Two statements in this book excited the displeasure of Napoleon. When he met the electors on the Champs de Mars to sign the Additional Act, to which he swore upon he Evangelists to adhere, it was "observed that Napoleon kept on his hat during the whole solemnity before the assembled representatives of the nation, whose heads were uncovered, and even when he took the oath, as if to show a sort of defiance of earth and heaven. But in all probability it was from prudence that he kept on his hat, which was always lined with steel and fitted to guard his head from danger. For the rest of his body he had nothing to fear, being always wrapped in a coat of mail." He who "deemed himself the irresistible, the omnipotent, was again angry when he found his name omitted from the poem on the Peace of Amiens, and he was far more irritated at the epithet of '*subject* waves' applied to England.

"'And thou, loved Britain, my parental isle,
Secure, encircled by thy *subject* waves.'

This was touching a jarring string indeed; this was declaring myself of the faction of sea despots. It was almost treason; but I had friends at court, and therefore escaped with a slight punishment, inflicted a few months after by the prefect of police, who arrested me and my whole family on pretext of examining my papers, from which ordeal I came out triumphant, having been detained a prisoner only twenty-four hours."

In 1818 appeared the translation by Miss Williams of "Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent during the Years 1799–1804," by Alexander von Humboldt and Aimé Bon-Pland, with maps, plans, etc. Written in French by Alexander von Humboldt. In her preface to the translation, Miss Williams writes: "M. de Humboldt has in this work displayed more than in any other he has yet published his peculiar manner of contemplating nature in all her overwhelming greatness. The appropriate character of his writings is the faculty he possesses of raising the mind to general ideas without neglecting individual facts; and, while he appears only to address himself to our reason, he has the secret of awakening the imagination and of being understood by the heart."

In 1823 "Letters on Events in France since the Restoration in 1815" were followed by a narrative, "The Leper of the City of Aosta."

The works of Helen Maria Williams have been translated into all the modern languages of Europe. She has been called the English historian of the French Revolution.

Rest came to her on the 15th of December, 1807, at Paris.

But the joy that crowned her days de-

lighted many hearts for half a century until the death of Athanase Josué Coquerel, in 1875, a century after the Catholic Baron du Fossé made of his son Augustin a Protestant, who declared, "While I have a drop of blood in my veins I will combat human traditions, pious impostures, inventions of the third and fourth centuries, and I will defend the Eternal, my God, who is one, not three, nor four."

This spirit lived and grew in the two sons of Cecilia Coquerel, and in her three grandsons.—*Josephine Ellery Davis.*

HOME RELIGION.

III.

"Well," said Bob, "here's Marianne always breaking her heart about my reading on Sunday. Now I hold that what is bad on Sunday is bad on Monday, and what is good on Monday is good on Sunday."

"We cannot abridge other people's liberty," said I. "The generous, confiding spirit of Christianity has imposed not a single restriction upon us in reference to Sunday. The day is put at our disposal as a good father hands a piece of money to his child,—'There it is: take it and spend it well.' The child knows from his father's character what he means by spending it well, but he is left free to use his own judgment as to the mode.

"If a man conscientiously feels that reading of this or that description is the best for him as regards his moral training and improvement, let him pursue it, and let no man judge him. It is difficult, with the varying temperaments of men, to decide what are or are not religious books. One man is more religiously impressed by the reading of history or astronomy than he would be by reading a sermon. There may be overwrought and wearied states of the brain and nerves which require and make proper the diversions of light literature; and if so, let it be used. The mind must have its recreations as well as the body."

"But for children and young people," said my daughter, "would you let them read novels on Sunday?"

"That is exactly like asking, 'Would you let them talk with people on Sunday?' Now people are different: it depends, therefore, on who they are. Some are trifling and flighty, some are positively bad-principled, some are altogether good in their influence. So of the class of books called novels. Some are merely frivolous, some are absolutely noxious and dangerous, others again are written with a strong moral and religious purpose, and, being vivid and interesting, produce far more religious effect on the mind than dull treatises and sermons. The parables of Christ sufficiently establish the point that there is no inherent objection to the use of fiction in teaching religious truth. Good religious fiction, thoughtfully read, may be quite as profitable as any other reading."

"But don't you think" said Marianne, "that there is danger in too much fiction?"

"Yes," said I, "but the chief danger of all that class of reading it its *easiness*, and the indolent, careless mental habits it induces. A great deal of the reading of young people on all days is really reading to no purpose, its object being merely present amusement. It is a listless yielding of the mind to be washed over by a stream which leaves no fertilizing properties, and carries away by constant wear the good soil of thought. I should try to establish a barrier against this kind of reading, not only on Sunday, but on Monday, on Tuesday, and on all days. Instead, therefore, of objecting to any particular class of books for Sunday reading, I should say in general that reading merely for pastime, without any moral aim, is the thing to be guarded against. That which inspires no thought, no purpose, which steals away all our strength and energy, and makes the Sabbath a day of dreams, is the reading I would object to.

"So of music. I do not see the propriety of confining one's self to technical sacred music. Any grave, solemn, thoughtful, or pathetic music has a proper relation to our higher spiritual nature, whether it be printed in a church service book or on secular sheets. On me, for example, Beethoven's Sonatas have a far more deeply religious influence than much that has religious names and words. Music is to be judged by its effects."

"Well," said Bob, "if Sunday is given for our own individual improvement, I for one should not go to church. I think I get a great deal more good in staying at home and reading."

"There are two considerations to be taken into account in reference to this matter of church-going," I replied. "One relates to our duty as members of society in keeping up the influence of the Sabbath, and causing it to be respected in the community; the other, to the proper disposition of our time for our own moral improvement. As members of the community we

should go to church, and do all in our power to support the outward ordinances of religion. If a conscientious man makes up his mind that Sunday is a day for outward acts of worship and reverence, he should do his own part as an individual towards sustaining these observances. Even though he may have such mental and moral resources that as an individual he could gain much more in solitude than in a congregation, still he owes to the congregation the influence of his presence and sympathy. But I have never yet seen the man, however finely gifted morally and intellectually, whom I thought in the long run a gainer in either of these respects by the neglect of public worship. I have seen many who in their pride kept aloof from the sympathies and communion of their brethren, who lost strength morally, and deteriorated in ways that made themselves painfully felt. Sunday is apt in such cases to degenerate into a day of mere mental idleness and reverie, or to become a sort of waste-paper box for scraps, odds, and ends of secular affairs.

"As to those very good people—and many such there are—who go straight on with the work of life on Sunday, on the plea that 'to labor is to pray,' I simply think they are mistaken. In the first place, to labor is *not* the same thing as to pray. It may sometimes be as good a thing to do, and in some cases even a better thing, but it is not the same thing. A man might as well never write a letter to his wife, on the plea that making money for her is writing to her. It may possibly be quite as great a proof of love to work for a wife as to write to her, but few wives would not say that both were not better than either alone. Furthermore, there is no doubt that the intervention of one day of spiritual rest and aspiration so refreshes a man's whole nature and oils the many wheels of existence that he who allows himself a weekly Sabbath does more work in the course of his life for the omission of work on that day.

"A young student in a French college, where the examinations are rigidly severe, found by experience that he succeeded best in his examination by allowing one day of entire rest just before it. His brain and nervous system refreshed in this way carried him through the work better than if taxed to the last moment. There are men transacting a large and complicated business who can testify to the same influence from the repose of the Sabbath.

"I believe those Christian people who from conscience and principle turn their thoughts most entirely out of the current of worldly cares on Sunday fulfil unconsciously a great law of health; and that, whether their moral nature be thereby advanced or not, their brain will work more healthfully and actively for it, even in physical and worldly matters. It is because the Sabbath thus harmonizes the physical and moral laws of our being that the injunction concerning it is placed among the ten great commandments, each of which represents some one of the immutable needs of humanity."—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

BEAUTY IN DRESS.

III.

"Again, the genius of American life is for simplicity and absence of ostentation. We have no parade of office; our public men wear no robes, no stars, garters, collars, etc.; and it would therefore be in good taste in our women to cultivate simple styles of dress. Now I object to the present fashions, as adopted from France, that they are flashy and theatrical. Having their origin with a community whose senses are blunted, drugged, and deadened with dissipation and ostentation, they reject the simpler forms of beauty, and seek for startling effects, for odd and unexpected results. The contemplation of one of our fashionable churches, at the hour when its fair occupants pour forth, gives one a great deal of surprise. The toilets there displayed might have been in good keeping among showy Parisian women in an opera house, but even their original inventors would have been shocked at the idea of carrying them into a church. The rawness of our American mind as to the subject of propriety in dress is nowhere more shown than in the fact that no apparent distinction is made between church and opera house in the adaptation of attire. Very estimable and we trust very religious young women sometimes enter the house of God in a costume which makes their utterance of the words of the litany and the acts of prostrate devotion in the service seem almost burlesque. When a brisk little creature comes into a pew with hair frizzed till it stands on end in a most startling manner, rattling strings of beads and bits of tinsel, mounting over all some pert little hat with a red or green feather standing saucily upright in front, she may look exceedingly pretty and piquant; and, if she came there for a game of croquet or a tableau party, would be all in

very good taste; but, as she comes to confess that she is a miserable sinner, that she has done the things she ought not to have done, and left undone the things she ought to have done,—as she takes upon her lips most solemn and tremendous words, whose meaning runs far beyond life into a sublime eternity,—there is a discrepancy which would be ludicrous if it were not melancholy.

"One is apt to think, at first view, that Saint Jerome was right in saying,

" 'She who comes in glittering vest
To mourn her frailty, still is frail.'

But Saint Jerome was in the wrong, after all; for a flashy, unsuitable attire in church is not always a mark of an undevout or entirely worldly mind, it is simply a mark of a raw, uncultivated taste. In Italy the ecclesiastical law prescribing a uniform black dress for the churches gives a sort of education to European ideas of propriety in toilet, which prevents churches from being made theatres for the same kind of display which is held to be in good taste at places of public amusement. It is but justice to the inventors of Parisian fashions to say that, had they ever had the smallest idea of going to church and Sunday-school, as our good girls do, they would immediately have devised toilets appropriate to such exigencies. If it were any part of their plan of life to appear statedly in public to confess themselves 'miserable sinners,' we should doubtless have sent over here the design of some graceful penitential habit, which would give our places of worship a much more appropriate air than they now have. As it is, it would form a subject for such a court of inquiry and adaptation as we have supposed, to draw a line between the costume of the theatre and the church."—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

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*LETTERS OF A SISTER.**

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

BOSTON, Nov. 8, 1840.

My dear James,—We are now settled in Boston and snugly stowed away in winter quarters, and I have been too busy for some days to write a letter. But we have been anxiously expecting to hear from you for several days. I thought you would arrive at Meadville the twenty-eighth or ninth, and that we should hear from you before this time. A letter came for you from Louisville from your friend, Mr. Munn, urging you to return, and saying that a committee had been appointed to open a correspondence with you upon the subject. I hope, however, that they would not be able to prevail with you. We have heard nothing directly from the Waltham people, only that they speak of it as if they expected to have you for their minister for a year as soon as they can dispose of their other candidate. Mr. Ripley (George) is going to resign in January and leave in April. He nominates you for his successor and Mrs. Ripley Anna for hers. I think the Waltham place is better, though.

We have already begun attending lectures. Mr. Richard Dana's I went to, and liked it very much. He has a course of eight and a choice audience of half the great lecture room full. I went to the first of the diffusion lectures to hear J. Q. Adams, but was disappointed, for I had thought it would be great things to hear him on any subject. Soon after you left I received an invitation to see the Statue Gallery by torchlight, and I was very sorry that you were not here, for it was a fine sight. The illumination of "Day and Night" alone would have been enough. They made fifty different pictures of the group, and the grace of "Night" came out in a thousand lines. It was astonishing to see how much they gained by it. The antique statues particularly showed new and stronger features. The Diana seemed like an embodied breeze,—true sister of Apollo,—and the face of Apollo I seemed not to have seen before.

Margaret began her conversations again last week, with twenty-five ladies. Anna W. goes to them: she was disappointed to find you were gone.

Mr. Ripley is getting on with his plans fast.* Aunt H. will not sell her place, but they think now of one in West Roxbury near where Mr. (Theodore) Parker lives, five miles from us. Ripley says now he will begin if no one joins him, and I think that may be the true way.

To-day is election, and the Whigs have gained the victory in every ward but one. They are shouting at the United States Hotel to cheer Daniel Webster at this moment.

Yours,

SARAH.

BOSTON, Nov. 15, 1840.

Mr. Ripley has concluded to dissolve his connection with his society the 1st of January and to remain with them till the 1st of April: after that he will go on the farm at any rate.

We find no preachers for us in Boston,

* Several letters have been omitted, as being of temporary and personal interest only.

* The Brook Farm Community.

and no place of worship that we prefer to any other. Mr. S., it has been remarked, is quite out of use. They don't invite him now to preach in Boston. I saw Dr. Channing yesterday, and he inquired with interest after you and whether you had matured any "plans." I told him no, but that you wanted to see him and meant to write to him, and I think you had better do so.

The grand convention takes place this week, beginning on Tuesday. Dr. Channing is going, and is expected to speak. Mr. Parker means to hold forth: Mr. Emerson will be there. I understand the object is to inquire into the true grounds of the institutions of Church, Sabbath, and preaching, and to find out and make known what is the *Christian* authority for these things, and how far they are sustained on Jewish grounds *actually*. I think it will be interesting, and if you were here should be glad to go with you.

We have heard nothing definite from Waltham, but from some persons hear that they expect to have you for their minister—from others that they *do not*. What it means I do not understand nor how the affair stands. Mr. E. P. Clark desires the honor of your acquaintance, and also his wife. She was and is a sister of Charlotte Wilby, and comes to the conversations and holds forth a good deal. Anna W. also, and talks in her own peculiar and beautiful way.

We were very glad to get your letters which told us of A. and your son: they were most interesting to us. Aunt Curtis is sure you do not exaggerate the beauty of Anna when even you say she looks like an angel. . . . I hope we shall all live at Newton next summer, and that you will preach at Waltham. Our colony of friends will probably settle at West Roxbury and try the experiment of life on a new plan and a true plan. There is one bad omen, however: the practical Christians have filed off, resisting the resistance to non-resistant principles in the Ripley party. There are now six families who are ready to begin next spring,—three farmers and three teachers.

If you write any more bad verses, I wish you would let me have them. I have done nothing since you left, either good or bad. But next week I intend to go to my painting room and pass every forenoon there, and it will be strange if some ill doings do not result. Farewell,

YOUR SISTER.

BOSTON, Nov. 22, 1840.

My dear James,—It seems to be my Sunday business to write to you. The past week has been one of various adventures. One day we passed at the convention, which was a curious and wonderful scene—all sorts of persons there showed themselves. Bearded men, Jews—and Junkers, old patriarchs from the mountains with their Bibles in their hands prepared to read it through, and other old men with new light in their hearts prepared to speak for immediate inspiration. I saw only one man who seemed to me to speak with an evil purpose—but I was not there all the time. I believe all concluded that nothing was done towards the object of the convention, for every man spoke his own thought and no man cared to hear the thought of another. Several women spoke, but not much to the purpose. One woman broke in upon the speech of a man and in a loud, clear voice read several chapters of the Bible, and afterwards a discourse which she had written for the occasion, which occupied as much as half an hour and had no pretence of aiming at the point. But she was moved to do it, and they suffered her, though Brother Garrison remarked when she got through, that he was sure a man would not have been allowed to interrupt another in that way, and he voted that they should not be respecters of persons in any way. Another old man, after speaking two or three hours to show that the gospel ought not to be bought and sold, that the pews should not be hired out or ministers paid, and that truth was not merchantable, as he best phrased his proposition, was brought to a conclusion by another asking him this question: said the objector: "I believe that the gospel should not be paid for. I believe that abolition is a part of the gospel. Shall I pay money to the abolitionists or not?" My old friend being an abolitionist was posed, so he turned about and kneeled down, saying in a loud voice, "Let us pray"—and he prayed a long time.

Mr. Parker, I was told, made a right learned and sensible speech. Mr. Alcott, as I heard and can well believe, made the best speech that was spoken there. Father Taylor attempted to defend the ministry, but bungled very much—he was angry and too much excited. Mrs. Chapman was secretary and took notes of the whole. Edmund Quincy was president. They adjourned the convention to next March, when they will consider the question of the ministry, I believe. The last discussion ran into that subject very much. I wish you had been here, for I think you would have found something good to say. Our ministers did not go to it much: they chose to consider the inquiry as an insult to religion.

Mr. Ripley gets on very fast with his community. Next week it will be settled whether it goes on or not. He does not mean to proceed unless he has thirty thousand dollars subscribed, and a great part of it is already made up; but he declares he will begin with nothing less.

Mr. Smith from Waltham came here yesterday to see mother and to tell her that they were going to have a meeting to consider the subject of sending for you, and they wanted to learn from her your views. She was very cautious, and told them they must write to you and make their proposals, but that she did not know what you thought about it now. We have been wondering what they meant, for they have said a great deal about wishing to have you and how much they liked you, etc.; but we could not learn why they did not propose at once. Mr. Emerson said the other day that they wished much to have you, but that as soon as the people found out that Dr. H. wanted any person, they set their faces against that person at once, because they are jealous that he might govern them. This cast more light upon the subject than was there before. I suppose you will get a letter directly from them. We are very glad that you did not hesitate about refusing to return to Louisville, for it is quite true that there is no new reason for your returning. Margaret has heard from Ellen since she arrived. She stopped a few days in Cincinnati, and Mr. Greene invited her to spend the winter at his house. What good people they are. She has a slight prospect of going back there to keep school, and has an offer to go to Vicksburg as a salaried teacher.

Tell Anna that Olivia Sullivan Ward desires a particular remembrance to her and hopes to see her next summer and introduce her son to Anna's son. Grandmother desires her love to her little great-grandchild.

Mother wishes me to tell you that Mr. Briggs said to her that the Waltham society meant to offer you a thousand dollars a year, and that you ought not to go for less. I should hardly think they would wish you to do so. Farewell,

S. A. C.

GOLD MEDAL DOGS.

AN ENGINE DRIVER'S STORY.

"Yes, indeed, we have some queer little incidents happen to us," said the engine driver, as he plied his oil can about and under his machine. "A queer thing happened to me about a year ago. You'd think it queer for a rough man like me to cry for ten minutes, and nobody hurt either, wouldn't you? Well, I did, and I can almost cry every time I think of it. I was running along one afternoon pretty lively, when I approached a little village where the track cuts through the streets. I slacked up a little, but was still making good speed, when suddenly, about twenty rods ahead of me, a little girl, not more than three years old, toddled on to the track. You can't even imagine my feelings.

"There was no way to save her. It was impossible to stop or even slacken much at that distance, as the train was heavy and the grade descending. In ten seconds it would have been all over, and, after reversing and applying the brakes, I shut my eyes. I didn't want to see any more. As we slowed down, my fireman stuck his head out of the cab window to see what I'd stopped for, when he laughed and shouted to me, 'Jim, look here!' I looked, and there was a big, black Newfoundland dog holding the little girl in his mouth, leisurely walking toward the house where she evidently belonged. She was kicking and crying, so that I knew she wasn't hurt and the dog had saved her.

"My fireman thought it funny and kept on laughing, but I cried like a woman! I just couldn't help it, I had a little girl of my own at home."—*Selected.*

SOUTH NORWALK, CT., January 26.

Right in the path of the Pittsfield express, little "Buster" Plunkett, the three-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. James Plunkett, abandoned by his little friends, sat crying and within a few inches of death, when Irish, a large St. Bernard dog, pulled the child to safety just as the express whizzed past. "Buster" is a favorite in his neighborhood, and the children strive for the opportunity of drawing him around on his sled. Big, playful Irish, owned by John Davis, a neighbor, was frisking around the children as lighthearted as they, when, in crossing the railroad tracks, the sled lodged on the bare ground and the children dropped the rope and ran for home. Irish then went to the rescue. The train was stopped and a purse made up for the boy and dog.—*Our Four Footed Friends.*

THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Many words by use gain a meaning more limited and more particular than they at first bore. Thus the Jews had such strong national feelings that their word "nations,"

means *foreign* Nations, and we leave it untranslated,—the Heathen or the Gentiles. So Paul, in 1 Corinthians xiv., speaking of a *language*, means a foreign language.

Since the conquest of Judea by the Assyrians, the Jews had been very much scattered among the neighboring nations, but never lost their love of home. The word "dispersion" thereby gained a peculiar meaning; and Peter, writing to his countrymen abroad, calls them *The Pilgrims* of the *Dispersion* (1 Peter i. 1). James also writes to the twelve tribes of the *Dispersion*.

Words which have two meanings in the same sentence can seldom be properly translated. Thus, in John iii. 8 we have one word meaning both *Wind* and *Spirit*. In Mark viii. 35–37 we have a word meaning both *Life* and *Soul*. In Hebrews ix. 15, 20, we have a word meaning both Testament and Covenant. In each of these cases the argument rests on the ambiguity of the word, and is lost in a translation. It must be left to the commentator to explain them.

Even the very simple words "Greeks," "Jews," and "Hebrews" are not without two meanings, each. The Apostle Paul, by Greeks, often means all who are not Jews; as, "There is no difference between Jew and Greek" (Roman x. 12). By Jews, Paul means all who were of the Jewish religion, but the Evangelist John means natives of Judea only.

By the word "Hebrews" the writer of the Book of Acts (vi. 1) means those only who spoke Hebrew; while he calls the Jews who spoke Greek, Grecians, or Hellenists. On the other hand, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews means to address all of the Jewish faith, but he certainly wrote in Greek; and, though he calls his readers Hebrews, he did not write for the use of those who used the Hebrew language.—*Samuel Sharpe.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

(Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.)

I.

ENIGMA.

I am composed of 25 letters.

My 3, 12, 23, 21, 10, 6, is a large vulture.

My 4, 7, 24, 17, is a fabric of fine thread.

My 13, 14, 11, 20, is a native of Finland.

My 8, 25, 1, 16, 19, 6, is a machine for spreading hay.

My 18, 12, 15, 16, is a small body of water.

My 3, 5, 9, 6, 23, is a heap of stones.

My 21, 2, 22, 6, is a ruminant forest quadruped.

My whole is a famous paper signed in July.

II.

A LABYRINTH OF LETTERS.

S	E	E	V	I	L	O	O	C	E	T
L	M	R	W	E	H	T	T	S	R	L
O	L	A	E	O	T	E	P	K	E	A
H	L	D	N	D	O	R	A	R	R	W

By beginning at a certain letter, and following a path, using no letter twice, the names of three persons born in August may be spelled.

III.

SUGGESTIONS.

What famous persons do the following objects suggest?

1. Icebergs and floes.
2. A burning bush.
3. A ruff.
4. A mantle with many rents.
5. A pearl.

—*Youth's Companion.*

IV.

CHANGED INITIALS.

Example. Change a fabric of fine thread to a contest in running.

Answer. L-ace, R-ace.

1. Change to move off to a connoisseur,
2. Change a Latin pronoun to in time past.
3. Change a heap to a measure of distance.
4. Change final to a point of the compass.
5. Change an article of furniture to a carnivorous animal.
6. Change anger to metal in its mineral state.
7. Change an inflamed swelling to labor.
8. Change an atom to frozen fluid.
9. Change a ruminant forest quadruped to a prophet.

When the changes have been rightly made and the words written one below another, the initial letters will spell the name of a Revolutionary patriot.

Answers to Puzzles in the June number.

I. DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Garfield, McKinley.

II. FLOWER ANAGRAMS.—1. Gardenia. 2. Honeysuckle. 3. Sweet Pea. 4. Chrysanthemum. 5. Geranium.

III HEROES AND HEROINES.—1. The Caged Lion. 2. Ivanhoe. 3. Lieutenant-Governor. 4. Mill on the Floss. 5. Mr. Crewe's Career. 6. Scarlet Letter.

IV. ACROSTIC.

D A R T M O U T H
L A S S I T U D E
D I N W I D D I E
F E R D I N A N D
G A L V E S T O N
C H A M P L A I N
H A M P S H I R E
A C C O R D I O N
L E X I N G T O N

WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP?

"People do not sufficiently remember that in every relation of life, as in the closest one of all, they ought to take one another "for better, for worse." That, granting the tie of friendship, gratitude, or esteem be strong enough to have existed at all, it ought either actively or passively to exist forever. And seeing we can, at best, know our neighbor, companion, or friend, as little as, alas! we often find he knoweth of us, it behooveth us to treat him with the most patient fidelity, the tenderest forbearance, granting to all his words and actions that we do not understand the utmost limit of faith which common sense and Christian justice will allow. Nay, these failing, is there not still left Christian Charity, which, being past "believing and hoping," still "endureth all things?"

"The true theory of friendship is this,—once a friend, always a friend. But, answerest thou, doth not every day's practice give the lie to that doctrine? Many, if not most friendships, be like a glove that, however well-fitting at first, doth by constant use wax loose and ungainly if it doth not quite wear out. And others not put off and on, but close to a man as his own skin and flesh, are yet liable to become diseased: he may have to lose them and live on without them,—as after the lopping off of a limb or the blinding of an eye. And likewise there be friendships which a man groweth out of, naturally and blamelessly, even as out of his child clothes, the which, though no longer suitable for his needs, he keepeth religiously unforgotten and undestroyed, and often visiteth with a kindly tenderness, though he knoweth they can cover and warm him no more. All these instances do clearly prove that a friend is not always a friend."

"Yea," quoth Fidelis, "but he is, not in himself, maybe, but unto thee. The future and the present are thine and his: the past is beyond ye both, an unalienable possession, a bond never disannulled. Ye may let it slip of natural disuse; throw it aside as worn out and foul; cut it off, cover it up and bury it; but it hath been and therefore in one sense forever must be. Transmutation is the law of all mortal things; but, so far as we know, there is not and will not be, until the great day of the second death, in the whole universe any such thing as annihilation.

"And so take heed. Deceive not thyself, saying that because a thing is not it never was. Respect thyself,—thine old self as well as thy new. Be faithful to thyself and to all that was ever thine. Thy friend is always thy friend,—not to have or to hold, to love or to rejoice in, but to *remember*.

"And, if it befall thee as befalleth most, that in course of time nothing will remain for thee except to remember, be not afraid! Hold fast that which was thine, it is thine forever. Deny it not, despise it not: respect its secrets, be silent over its wrongs. And so kept, it shall never lie like a dead thing on the heart, corrupting and breeding corruption there, as dead things do. Bury it and go thy way. It may chance that one day long hence thou shalt come suddenly upon the grave of it,—and behold! it is dewy green."

REMEDY FOR HYDROPHOBIA.

Those who live in great fear of hydrophobia, and believe that any dog bite or scratch is as dangerous as the sting of a rattlesnake would be, may find some comfort in a statement made by a noted physician of London, who says that there is sufficient evidence of the beneficial effects of the vapor bath treatment both in preventing and in curing hydrophobia to warrant a fair and prolonged trial of the method. As many other dog diseases are liable to be mistaken for rabies, and as it is getting to be a common occurrence for persons who are bitten even by a healthy dog to be very much alarmed about themselves, the simple and convenient remedy of the hot air or vapor bath, sometimes called the Buisson Remedy, should be generally known.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

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Subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* should be sent to the secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Make checks payable to Lily Blunt Porter.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

Headquarters of the Cheerful Letter Exchange are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, may be found there on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

There will be no monthly meetings of the Cheerful Letter Exchange during the summer months. Notice will be given of the first meeting held in the autumn.

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The Editor asks POSTMASTERS who send notices of changes of address not to send these notices to the Editor, but to the Secretary, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Any subscriber not receiving the paper regularly is requested to notify the Secretary.

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